

# Big Game Rules

## General Wildlife Laws

(For complete laws and rules, see Idaho laws and administrative code [http://www.state.id.us/laws\\_rules/](http://www.state.id.us/laws_rules/))

**All hunters must have a valid Idaho hunting license and the appropriate tags or permits in their possession while hunting.**

**Hunting Hours:** Big game animals may be hunted only from 1/2 hour before sunrise to 1/2 hour after sunset.

**Definition of Hunting:** Hunting means chasing, driving, flushing, attracting, pursuing, worrying, following or on the trail of, shooting at, stalking, or lying in wait for any wildlife whether or not such wildlife is then subsequently captured, killed, taken or wounded.

**Age Limit:** Only properly licensed youths 12 or older may hunt big game, **except** an 11-year-old may buy a license to apply for a controlled hunt permit, but he or she must be 12 years old at the time of the hunt. A youth small game license available for hunters of age 10 and 11 is not valid for big game.

**Bag and Possession Limits:** A hunter may harvest only as many of a big game animal species as he or she has legal tags for in that year. Any animal harvested in a depredation hunt before a controlled hunt in the same unit for which the hunter holds a tag must be included under the limit and tagging rules of the controlled hunt permit. No person may take more than 1 animal per year during a controlled hunt season by using both a controlled hunt tag and a depredation tag.

**Gifts of Wildlife:** No person may possess more game animals, birds or fish taken within the state than allowed by personal possession limits.

**Mandatory Report Requirements:** All deer, elk and pronghorn hunters are required to complete a **Mandatory Hunter Report** for each tag they purchase. In 2010 Mandatory hunter reporting moved to an entirely paperless system. Hunters are required to submit a report by phone or internet within 10 days after harvest. Hunters who do not harvest, or did not hunt with their tag, are required to report within 10 days after the close of the hunting season.

**The best way to submit hunt information and the only way to get confirmation that the report was received is to report online. Go to:** <http://www.fishandgame.idaho.gov>.

To submit by phone to a live operator, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week call toll free 1-877-268-9365.

### Waste of Game

Hunters are required to remove and care for the edible meat of big game animals, except black bears, mountain lions and gray wolves. This includes the meat from hind quarters as far down as the hock, meat of the front quarters as far down as the knee and meat along the backbone which is the loin and tenderloin. It does not include meat of the head or neck, meat covering or between the ribs, internal organs, or meat on the bones after close trimming.

### Wounding and Retrieving

No person shall wound or kill any big game animal without

making a reasonable effort to retrieve it and reduce it to possession. It is unlawful to enter private property that is posted, cultivated or in irrigated pasture without landowner permission to retrieve game.

### Electronic Calls

No electronic calls may be used to attract big game for the purpose of harvest, except such calls may be used to attract mountain lions and bears in seasons where approved by Commission proclamation.

### It is Unlawful To:

- Hunt or take any wildlife without a valid hunting license or without required tag or permit in possession.
  - Party hunt, or help fill another person's tag.
  - Shoot from or across the traveled portion, shoulders, or embankments of any road maintained by any government entity.
  - Hunt big game or game birds from or by the use of any motorized vehicle, **except** for holders of a valid handicapped person's Motor Vehicle Hunting Permit when vehicle is stopped and off public roadways. See Upland Game, Furbearer and Turkey rules brochure for other exceptions.
  - Use any motorized vehicle to molest, stir up, rally or drive any game animal or game bird.
  - Operate any vehicle in an area designated as closed for that specific vehicle type.
  - Operate or use as an aid to hunting a motor vehicle in violation of area, trail, or road restrictions.
  - Use aircraft to locate game or furbearing animals and communicate location to persons on the ground, or to use any helicopter to transport hunters, gear, or game except at established landing fields.
  - Fail to stop – with or without fish or wildlife – at any Fish and Game check station encountered, even if your hunting, fishing or trapping activity occurred outside the state of Idaho.
  - Fail to produce wildlife for inspection upon request of a conservation officer or other person authorized to enforce Idaho Fish and Game rules.
  - Hunt any wildlife species with the aid of artificial light, except predatory and unprotected wildlife (see pg 66).
- Permit required from Idaho Fish and Game Regional office.** See furbearer rules in Upland Game Seasons brochure for specific regulations and other exceptions.
- Hunt big game with dogs **except** for black bears and mountain lions. See bear and mountain lion sections for details.

- Transfer any license, tag, or permit or use another's license, tag, or permit.
- Acquire more controlled hunt tags per species than allowed by Commission rule.
- Destroy or disturb traps, or remove any wildlife from traps belonging to others.
- Enter Idaho with livestock without a health certificate for transport and a brand inspection slip.
- Intentionally interfere with the lawful taking of wildlife or lawful predator control by another.
- Hunt any game animal by means of baiting with the exception of applicable rules for the black bear baiting permit (See pages 56 and 57). Bait is defined as any substance placed to attract game animals, except liquid scent for deer and elk.
- Take big game with the aid of radio telemetry; use of telemetry equipment with hounds or other sporting dogs is allowed.
- Black bears may not be hunted or pursued within 200 yards of the perimeter of any designated dump ground or landfill.

### Trespass Law

No person may enter private land to hunt, fish or trap or retrieve wildlife without permission if the land is either cultivated or posted with legible "No Trespassing" signs. Proper posting means either signs, 100 square inches of fluorescent orange paint, or an entire fluorescent orange metal fence post every 660 feet around the property and at reasonable access points.

Land that has been loosened or broken up in preparation for raising crops, used for raising crops or as irrigated pasture is considered cultivated.

It is unlawful for anyone to post public land that is not held under an exclusive control lease. Conviction of trespass on posted private property for the purpose of hunting, trapping or fishing carries a mandatory 1-year revocation of hunting, fishing or trapping licenses.

Federal law prohibits unauthorized trespass on Indian-owned reservation lands for hunting, fishing, or trapping purposes.

### Using Blinds on Public Lands - BLM

Hunting blinds on public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management must meet the following criteria:

1. Construction materials – Portable pop-up blinds are encouraged. No permanent placement of materials is allowed, and all materials must be removable. Wire mesh, which may be hazardous to wildlife or livestock, is not allowed. Damage to natural and cultural resources by actions such as digging, trenching or other surface disturbances is prohibited. Cutting live vegetation to build, screen or camouflage blinds is discouraged.
2. Labeling – The hunter's full name and ZIP code must be permanently attached, etched, engraved or painted on the blind in an obvious location.
3. Placement dates – Blinds may be placed no earlier than 10 days before the beginning of the hunting season for which the hunter has a valid tag, and must be removed within seven days of the close of that hunting season.
4. Right of use – Blinds may be used by hunters on a first-come, first-served basis. Placement of a blind on public land does not create an exclusive right of use. Locking blinds is not allowed. Please be respectful of other hunters' blinds.
5. Wildlife or livestock developments – Diverting water, tampering with or modifying rangeland developments, such as watering troughs, reservoirs, springs, fences, or related structures or water sources is prohibited. Hunters may not harass livestock or impede their access to water sources.

For more information, please contact the nearest BLM office.

### Areas Closed to Big Game Hunting:

- All state parks, except Farragut State Park and Farragut Wildlife Management Area, and Billingsley Creek at Malad Gorge State Park, Castle Rock State Park and state land within the City of Rocks National Reserve are open to all hunting.
- Part of the Craters of the Moon National Monument is closed to hunting. For information visit: <http://data2.itc.nps.gov/parks/crmo/ppMaps/national%20preserve.jpg>.
- Nez Perce National Historical Park in Clearwater, Idaho, and Nez Perce counties.
- Harriman State Park Wildlife Refuge.
- That portion of Ada County between State Highway 21, Warm Springs Avenue, and the Boise City limits.
- Yellowstone National Park in Fremont County.
- State designated wildlife preserves (Myrtle Creek, David Thompson, and Lewiston).
- State wildlife management areas, bird preserves, bird refuges, and bird sanctuaries that have been closed to hunting by legislative or commission action.
- All or portions of national wildlife refuges, except as specified in federal regulations for individual refuges.
- All Snake River islands between Glenns Ferry bridge and Sailor Creek bridge in Elmore County.
- Hagerman Fossil Beds National Monument in Twin Falls County, except that portion within an area 50 feet above the high water level of the Snake River. The upslope area is marked by yellow fiberglass markers, and hunting is permitted downslope to the river.
- Mountain lions may not be hunted or pursued within 1/2 mile of any active Idaho Fish and Game big game feeding site.

**Closed Seasons:** There is **no open season** for caribou, bison (buffalo), grizzly bear, lynx or gray wolves. With the exception of bison, these species are protected under the Endangered Species Act.

**Furbearers:** Bobcats, badgers and red foxes are classified as furbearers and may be hunted or trapped only during the furbearer season. No open season exists for lynx, wolverines or fishers. See upland game and trapping rules.

**Possession and Sale of Wildlife Parts:** Lawfully harvested wildlife parts – except edible meat from game animals – may be purchased, bartered or sold when accompanied by a written statement showing said wildlife was lawfully harvested. If black bear or mountain lion parts – excluding tanned or finished rugs or mounts – are sold or bartered, a signed written statement showing the taker’s name, address, license and tag numbers, date and the location of kill must be provided to the buyer. Buyers must submit completed transaction statements to Idaho Fish and Game within 10 days of sale.

Wildlife parts legally harvested outside of Idaho may be possessed and sold in Idaho if such sale is not prohibited in Idaho or the state, province or country where harvested, or by federal law.

It is unlawful to possess any wildlife or parts that were killed, taken or obtained unlawfully.

**Possession and Sale of Wildlife Found Dead:** Protected species of wildlife that have died of natural or accidental causes are generally considered property of the state and may not be possessed. But parts of big game species – horns, bones, antlers, elk teeth, bear and lion parts – may be recovered and possessed for personal use if the animal died of natural causes. Lawfully recovered and possessed parts – except horns from bighorn sheep – may be sold, transferred, purchased or bartered, when accompanied by a statement on how it was obtained. It is unlawful to possess wildlife that has died from any human-inflicted cause (e.g. hit by a vehicle, poached, etc.).

Edible meat from game animals taken from the wild may not be purchased, bartered or sold.

**Recovery, Possession and Sale of Bighorn Sheep Horns:** Horns from bighorn sheep that have died of natural causes may be recovered and possessed. All bighorn sheep horns must be presented to Fish and Game for marking with a permanent pin within 30 days of recovery. It is unlawful to sell, barter or purchase bighorn sheep horns obtained under these circumstances, or to transfer ownership of recovered bighorn sheep horns without a permit from Idaho Fish and Game.

**Predatory and Unprotected Wildlife:** Coyotes, skunks, weasels, jackrabbits, raccoons and starlings are classified by Idaho law as predatory and unprotected. They may be taken in any number year-round and at any time by holders of the appropriate valid Idaho hunting or trapping licenses, provided such taking is not in violation of state, county or city laws, ordinances, rules or regulations.

## Protected Nongame and Threatened or Endangered

**Species:** No person shall take or possess wildlife species classified as Protected Nongame or Threatened or Endangered at any time or in any manner, except as provided in Sections 36-106(e)5 and 36-1107, Idaho Code, by Commission Regulation, or IDAPA 13.01.10.100.06b.

**Livestock Health Certificate Requirement:** Anyone bringing livestock or hunting dogs into the state should call the Idaho Department of Agriculture, 208-332-8540, for health certificate requirements.

**Weed-Free Hay Requirement:** On national forest lands or Idaho Fish and Game wildlife management areas, anyone using pack animals or straw in their camp must only use weed-free certified hay, forage or straw to prevent the spread of noxious weeds. To obtain an up-to-date list of local growers and vendors with noxious weed-free certified forage for sale, call the Department of Agriculture at 208-332-8592, or check: <http://www.idahoag.us/Categories/PlantsInsects/NoxiousWeeds/nwffs.php>. For more information on the Noxious Weed-Free Forage certification program visit: <http://www.idahoag.us/Categories/PlantsInsects/NoxiousWeeds/indexnoxweedmain.php>.

**Prescribed Burning:** Prescribed burning uses fire to restore forests and rangelands and improve conditions for wildlife. Prescribed fire may be planned in your hunting unit. **Stay informed.** Contact your local land management agencies.

## Wildlife Violator Compact

Many states including Idaho have entered into a “Wildlife Violator Compact.” If your hunting, fishing, or trapping license is revoked by any of the member states, all the remaining states will revoke the same license or privilege for the same time period. In addition, any nonresident who does not satisfy the requirements of an Idaho citation will have his or her hunting and fishing license revoked in their home state until those requirements are satisfied. For information on the Compact and a list of member states, go to <http://fishandgame.idaho.gov>.

## Boundary Waters Reciprocal Agreement

The Oregon-Idaho boundary water reciprocal agreement recognizes the legal right to fish, hunt or trap in the waters or on the islands of the Snake River where said river forms the boundary line between the state of Oregon and the state of Idaho by the holder of either a valid Oregon or Idaho license in accordance with the laws and rules of the respective state.





## Weapon Restrictions

### Rifle and Shotgun

In any hunt, including any-weapon seasons, it is unlawful to pursue or kill big game animals:

- By any means other than approved firearms, muzzleloaders and archery methods.
- With any electronic device attached to, or incorporated on, the firearm or scope; **Except** scopes containing battery powered or tritium lighted reticles are allowed.
- With any firearm that, in combination with a scope, sling and/or any attachments, weighs more than 16 pounds.
- With any fully automatic firearm.
- With any shotgun using shot smaller than #00 buck.
- With any rimfire rifle, rimfire handgun, or muzzle-loading handgun, except for mountain lions.

### Short Range Weapons

In big game seasons restricted to short-range weapons, it is unlawful for hunters to use any weapon other than a muzzleloader, archery equipment, crossbow, a shotgun using slugs or shot of size #00 buck or larger, or a handgun using straight-walled cartridges not originally developed for rifles.

### Muzzleloader Caliber Requirements

In any hunt, including general any-weapon seasons and short-range hunts, it is unlawful to pursue or kill big game animals with any muzzleloading rifle or musket that is less than .45 caliber for deer, pronghorn, or mountain lion; or is less than .50 caliber for elk, moose, bighorn sheep, mountain goat or black bear.

### Muzzleloader-Only Season

Any person hunting in a muzzleloader-only season, including controlled hunts, must have in their possession a license with a muzzleloader permit validation. During a muzzleloader-only season, it is illegal to pursue or kill a big game animal with any firearm, muzzleloading pistol, or weapon other than a muzzleloading rifle or musket. In addition, the muzzleloading rifle or musket must be:

- Capable of being loaded only from the muzzle.
- Equipped with only open or peep sights. Scopes and any electronics are prohibited. **Except** hunters with a visual disability may apply for a permit to use nonmagnifying scopes. (Applications are available at Fish and Game offices.)
- Loaded only with loose black powder, loose Pyrodex, or other loose synthetic black powder. Pelletized powders are prohibited.
- Equipped with a single or double-barrel.
- Loaded with a projectile that is within .010 inch of the bore diameter. Sabots are prohibited.
- Loaded with a patched round ball or conical non-jacketed projectile comprised wholly of lead or lead alloy.
- Equipped only with a flint, percussion cap or musket cap. 209 primers are prohibited.

- Equipped with an ignition system in which any portion of the cap is exposed or visible when the weapon is cocked and ready to fire.

### Archery Equipment

In any hunt, including general any-weapon seasons and short-range hunts, it is unlawful to pursue or kill big game animals:

- With arrows or bolts having broadheads measuring less than 7/8 inch in width and having a primary cutting edge less than 0.015 inch thick.
- With any bow having a peak draw weight of less than 40 pounds up to or at a draw of 28 inches.
- With an arrow or bolt wherein the broadhead does not precede shaft and nock.
- With any chemicals or explosives attached to the arrow or bolt.
- With arrows or bolts having expanding broadheads.
- With arrows or bolts having barbed broadheads, which is a broadhead with any portion of which forms an angle less than 90 degrees with the shaft or ferrule.
- With any electronic or tritium-powered device attached to an arrow, bolt or bow. **Except** disabled archery permit holders may use a nonmagnifying sight with battery powered or tritium lighted reticles.
- With any bow capable of shooting more than one arrow at a time.
- With any compound bow set at more than 85 percent let-off.
- With an arrow or bolt, and broadhead with a combined total weight of less than 300 grains.
- With an arrow less than 24 inches from broadhead to nock inclusive.
- With a bolt (crossbow) less than 12 inches from broadhead to nock inclusive.

### Archery-Only Season

Any person hunting in an archery-only season, including controlled hunts, must have in their possession their license with archery permit validation. During an archery-only season, it is illegal for hunters to use any firearm or implement other than a longbow, compound bow or recurve bow in compliance with general archery equipment requirements, or:

- Any bow equipped with magnifying sights.
- Any device that holds a bow at partial or full draw. **Except** hunters possessing a disabled archery permit may use a device that holds a bow at partial or full draw. (Applications for the use of devices holding a bow at partial or full draw by disabled hunters are available at Fish and Game offices.)
- Any crossbow. **Except** disabled hunters possessing a permit may use a crossbow. (Applications for the use of crossbows by disabled hunters are available at Fish and Game offices.)

## Hound Hunting Rules

### Dogs

Dogs may be used to pursue black bears or mountain lions in either an open take season where use of dogs is allowed, or during a dog training season open for bear or mountain lion. Pursuit is allowed regardless of whether a black bear or lion already has been harvested. During a dog training season, black bears or lions may be pursued and treed, but may not be captured, killed, or possessed. Dogs may not be used to take or pursue any other big game species.

Any dog found running at large and actively tracking, pursuing, harassing, attacking or killing any big game animal, **except** black bear and mountain lion, may be destroyed without criminal or civil liability by the director of Fish and Game, any peace officer, or other persons authorized to enforce Idaho wildlife laws.

The use of one blood-trailing dog controlled by leash during lawful hunting hours and within 72 hours of hitting a big game animal is allowed to track wounded animals and aid in recovery. A hound hunter permit is not required.

### Hound Hunter Permit

When dogs are being used to hunt black bears or mountain lions, the following persons must have a valid hound hunter permit and a black bear or mountain lion tag for the current year in possession:

- Anyone who owns pursuit dogs.
- Anyone having control of dogs owned by another person.
- Anyone who harvests a black bear, mountain lion, bobcat, raccoon, or fox with the use of dogs. **Except**, clients of licensed outfitters are not required to have a hound hunter permit.

**Resident hound hunter permits** may be obtained from any license vendor. There is no limit on the number of resident hound hunter permits.

### Limitation on hound hunter permits for nonresidents:

Nonresidents who want to apply for hound hunter permits should notify the license section at Fish and Game headquarters office in October. Permits for the following year are issued in December. No more than 70 nonresident hound hunter permits will be issued to nonresident hunters who are not licensed outfitters (see exceptions for Middle Fork and Selway zones). Nonresident outfitters and guides who have obtained a hound hunter permit shall not use the permit for personal hunting. Sales of nonresident hound hunter permits to the following persons shall not be counted in the quota for nonresidents:

- **Persons who have moved into Idaho** and by notarized affidavit show proof of their intent to become bona fide Idaho residents but are not yet qualified to buy a resident license.

- **Middle Fork Zone:** Persons who hound hunt solely in game management units within the Middle Fork elk zone (Units 20A, 26, and 27).
- **Selway Zone:** Persons who hound hunt solely within the Selway Zone (Units 16A, 17, 19, and 20). A total of 40 permits will be issued for Units 16A, 19, 20, and all of Unit 17, excluding Hunt Area 17-1 which will have 6 permits. Hunt Area 17-1 is defined as that portion of Unit 17 south of the following boundary:

Beginning at the junction of the Unit 17 boundary and Forest Service Trail 24, then west along Forest Service Trail 24 to the Selway River, then north along the Selway River to Forest Service Trail 40, then southwest along Forest Service Trail 40 to Forest Service Trail 3, then west along Forest Service Trail 3 to the Unit 17 boundary.

**Hound Hunter Alert:** Selway and Middle Fork zones are wilderness areas. Vehicle access is restricted and rugged terrain can make pursuit extremely difficult. Contact the local Forest Service office for maps showing trails and access. Wolves may be present in any game management unit.

## Tagging and Transporting Game

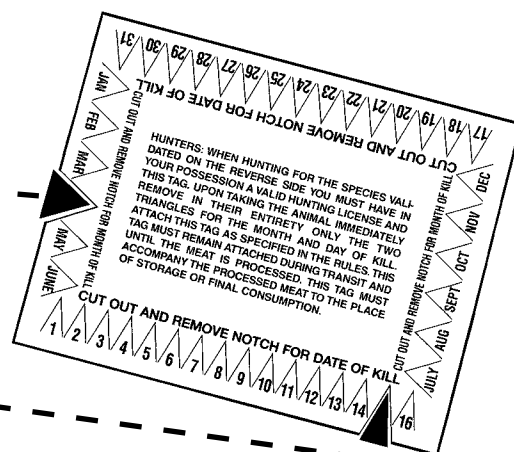
### Proper Tagging and Transportation of Animals and Meat

Immediately after any deer, elk, pronghorn, black bear, or mountain lion has been killed, the hunter harvesting the animal must comply with the following regulations regarding the proper tagging, transportation and shipment of a carcass:

- The appropriate big game tag must be validated and securely attached to the animal immediately after the kill. The validated tag must remain attached to the carcass until the meat is processed and reaches the place of final storage or personal consumption.

### How to properly validate a big game tag.

Hunters must completely remove two notches indicating month and day of kill.



**Note:** Immediately after the kill, the triangles denoting the month and day must be cleanly and completely removed. Tearing, slicing or punching the tag is not legal.

**Proper location of tag:**

- Deer, elk and pronghorn: Attach to the largest portion of the carcass.
- Black bears and mountain lions: Attach to the hide.

Any license, tag or permit that is defaced or altered is invalid from the date and time of issue. It is unlawful to use or attempt to use any license that has been defaced or altered.

**Transportation issues:**

Any person who transports any wildlife for another person or receives any wildlife for cleaning, processing, as a gift, or for storage must have a written proxy statement signed by the person who killed the animal specifying the numbers and kinds of wildlife, date taken, hunter's name and address, license, tag and permit numbers. The proxy form below is provided for your convenience.

**Preserving Evidence of Sex:**

**Deer, elk and pronghorn:** If the head or antlers are removed, evidence of sex in the form of testicles, penis, scrotum, udder or vulva must remain naturally attached to the carcass or parts thereof on all harvested big game animals until they reach the final place of storage or personal consumption, or a commercial meat processing facility.

Antlers or horns removed from the head must be left naturally attached to the skull plate where size, point or brow-tine restrictions apply, and they must accompany the carcass or parts thereof.

**Black bears and mountain lions:** External evidence of sex in the form of testicles, penis, scrotum or vulva must be left naturally attached to the hide until the mandatory check requirement has been satisfied.

**In seasons restricted to mule deer only or white-tailed deer only,** if the head is removed, the fully-haired tail must be left naturally attached to the carcass until it reaches the final place of storage or personal consumption, or a commercial meat processing facility.

**PROXY STATEMENT** (To transport wildlife taken by another person)

<b>BIG GAME:</b>	<b>Species</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Description (e.g.: antler points, wrapped, hind quarter, etc.)</b>	<b>Hunt Area Killed</b>	<b>Date Killed</b>
Please circle Species	Elk				
	Mule Deer				
	Whitetail				
	Other				

**OTHER FISH/GAME:**

Species \_\_\_\_\_ How many \_\_\_\_\_

Species \_\_\_\_\_ How many \_\_\_\_\_

Species \_\_\_\_\_ How many \_\_\_\_\_

Hunter/Angler's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

License No. \_\_\_\_\_ Tag No. \_\_\_\_\_ Permit No. \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person transporting \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_